



COMMUNITIES IN CULTURAL TRANSITION

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FORUM PROGRAM 2019

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**SHARING OUR STORIES
SHOWCASING OUR SUCCESSES**

**12 September 2019
Fairfield RSL Club**



NSW Service for the
Treatment and
Rehabilitation of
Torture and Trauma
Survivors

PROGRAM



8:30-9:30AM

Registration

MORNING SESSION

9:30AM-11:00AM

David Ajang

CiCT Project Officer

Welcoming Remarks

Jorge Aroche

STARTTS Chief Executive
Officer

Keynote Address

Prof. Peter Shergold AC

NSW Coordinator General for
Refugee Resettlement

Keynote Address

David Dedenczuk

A/q Director Humanitarian Settlement
Program Section
Department of Home Affairs

Keynote Address

Megan Platt

Regional Lead Housing and
Independent Living from New
Horizons

Keynote Address

Jasmina Bajraktarevic-Hayward

STARTTS Community Services
Coordinator

Launch of Community Living
Support for Refugees Program

Tibetan Youth

STARTTS Tibetan Youth Group

A Journey of Hope

Evelyn Agripa & Miriam Jalloh

Capoeira Angola Project

Project Bantu Dance Ensemble

MORNING TEA

11:00AM-11:30AM

PROGRAM



MID-MORNING SESSION

11:30AM-1:00PM

Carmen Lazar OAM

Program Manager & Consortium
Lead, Settlement Engagement and
Transition Support (SETS) Assyrian
Resource Centre - Assyrian
Australian Association

Refugees, We Are Here to Help

Samina Ihsan

Ahmadiyya Muslim
Community

From Struggle to Success, a
Journey of Misery, Striving for
Hope!

Bashar Hanna

The Peacemakers Ensemble

Learning English Through Songs

Maria Kojanian & dancers

Armenian Community

Dance Ensemble

Karen Ho

Vietnamese Australian

Share This Load

Dr. Wayne Fallon

Western Sydney University

Midday Wrap-up

LUNCH

1:00PM-2:00PM

PROGRAM



EARLY AFTERNOON SESSION 2:00PM-3:00PM

Marklin Ebo

Yazidi Community

Yazidi Community in Coffs
Harbour

Tuka Gautum & Pabritra Bhandari

STARTTS Bhutanese Women's Group

Bhutanese Refugee Survival
Story

Ahmed Iesso

Yazidi Community

The Yazidi Journey of Survival

Mariana Bathyoon

Iraqi Assyrian

I Am a Refugee

Mohamad Dukuly

STARTTS School Liaison Officer

Afternoon Wrap-Up

AFTERNOON TEA 3:00PM-3:40PM

PROGRAM



LATE AFTERNOON SESSION

3:40PM-5:00PM

Yasotha Pathmanathan
Tamil Community

The Way I Rebuilt My Life

Sajeda Bahardurmia
Rohingya Community

Empowering Women
& Children in my Community

Adile Cina
Afghan Community

The Journey through the Night

Zulfia Erk
Uyghur Community

Uyghur Refugee Story

Jasmina Bajraktarevic-Hayward Closing Remarks
STARRTS Community
Services Coordinator

FORUM CONCLUSION

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



JORGE AROCHE

STARTTS Chief Executive Officer

Jorge Aroche is a clinical psychologist and the Chief Executive Officer of the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors since 1997. As CEO of STARTTS he led the then fledgling organisation through some of the most challenging



times for refugee services in Australia. Along with an unparalleled period of growth and development in the size of the organisation and the scope and sophistication of its services, STARTTS has assisted more than 60,000 individual clients from over 70 nationalities since 1988, and is widely recognised as a leading organisation in the field of refugee trauma recovery.

PROF. PETER SHERGOLD AC

NSW Coordinator General for Refugee Resettlement

Professor Peter Shergold AC is Chancellor of the Western Sydney University. For two decades he was a senior public servant in the Australian Public Service, serving from 2003–2008 as Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. He is NSW Coordinator General of Refugee Resettlement; Chair of Opal Aged Care and Joblife; and Chair of AMP Foundation and the Centre for Social Impact.



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



DAVID DEDENCZUK

**A/g Director Humanitarian Settlement
Program Section, Department of Home Affairs**

David Dedenczuk is the acting Director of Humanitarian Settlement Programs section in the Department of Home Affairs. David has worked in a number of Australian Public Service agencies, having started as a Clerk



Class One in Telecom Australia, Hobart. David's interest in humanitarian settlement springs from memories of his father Tadeusz, who arrived at Bonegilla Migrant Camp (Victoria) as a displaced person from Poland in 1950. From Bonegilla, Tadeusz was assigned to work on the railways in Tasmania where he met Colleen, David's mother. David's heritage has encouraged his interest in refugee and humanitarian services.



MEGAN PLATT

**Regional Lead Housing & Independent
Living from New Horizons**

Megan has worked with New Horizons since 2014, overseeing Mental Health and Disability services in the South West Sydney Region. Megan has a passion for the community services sector, driving strategic outcomes and influencing change that makes a meaningful difference to consumers and the community.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

CARMAN LAZAR OAM

**Program Manager & Consortium Lead. Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) Assyrian Resource Centre
– Assyrian Australian Association**



Twenty years ago Mrs. Lazar began her career as an interpreter, then chose to enter management, where she mastered her client liaison and negotiation skills. Throughout her professional career, Carmen has continued to pursue her passion for community work for the Assyrian, Chaldean and Syrian Christian communities in Sydney. She is currently the

Centre Manager of the Assyrian Australian Association – Assyrian Resource Centre and advocates on behalf of the NSW Assyrian Community. Additionally she manages the delivery of government funded services at the Centre. Carmen has managed the Assyrian Saturday Language Schools as Principal for over 22 years and has contributed to the publication of many language resource books.

MARKLIN EBO

Yazidi Community

Marklin is a member of the Kurdish Yazidi community from Syria. After fleeing Syria, Marklin and her family lived temporarily in Iraq. She came to Australia on a Humanitarian Visa with her family in March 2017. She had a law degree from Aleppo University in Syria and worked as a lawyer for two years before the Syrian war. Since arriving in Australia, Marklin has become a facilitator at STARTTS in the Families in Cultural Transition Program. Marklin also enjoys volunteering her time to aid her community.



COMMUNITY SPEAKERS



AFGHAN COMMUNITY, ADILE CINA



Adile Cina is involved in refugee focussed community work. A few years ago, one of his poems was produced into a short movie drama associated with asylum seekers in Sydney. Adile has published a book, ten magazines, community newspapers, had his work showcased in anthologies and broadcasted on radio and TV. Adile has also spent time running an association to help people from a

refugee background. Adile's history in a war-torn country is expressed though most of his work and focused on themes of society, equality and justice.

AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY, SAMINA IHSAN

Samina came to Australia in 2010 from Pakistan and is a member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. It was not an easy journey from facing religious persecution in her country, finding refuge in Australia and resettling into a new society. However Samina's own community and Australian society as a whole provided her with a sense of belonging and gave her numerous opportunities to build a happy

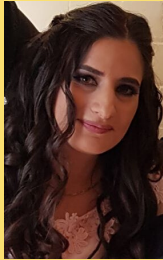
and successful life. She is proud to be an Ahmadi-Pakistani Australian and happily leading a life with her family doing community development work.



COMMUNITY SPEAKERS



ARMENIAN COMMUNITY, MARIA KOJANIAN & DANCERS



Armenians are one of the world's oldest civilisations, with a rich and unique cultural heritage in areas such as music, arts, and architecture. Armenia was the first nation to officially adopt Christianity in 301 AD. Armenians also have their own unique alphabet. The Armenian community in Australia is estimated at about 50,000, who primarily reside in Sydney and Melbourne. The first Armenians migrated to Australia from Asia in the 1850s. Later migrated from the Middle East, Egypt, Cyprus, Lebanon and Syria due to the civil unrest and war.



BHUTANESE WOMEN'S GROUP, TUKA GAUTUM & PABRITIA BHANDARI

The Bhutanese women's group was established in 2015 as part of the community development program offered by STARTTS. Group members are Bhutanese

women of refugee background whose incredible journey of survival has led them from the highlands of Bhutan to Sydney Australia. The purpose of the group is to enhance the emotional and physical wellbeing and resilience; to break social isolation and to develop support structures; to increase personal empowerment, self-esteem and confidence, and to facilitate each member's creative potential.

COMMUNITY SPEAKERS



CAPOEIRA ANGOLA COMMUNITY - PROJECT BANTU, EVELYN AGRIPA & MIRIAM JALLOH



Project Bantu is an intervention program that introduces the Afro-Brazilian art form of Capoeira Angola to young people from refugee backgrounds. The project combines the healing potential of musical and physical expression, and utilises a mentoring approach to provide a range of social and learning outcomes and building empowerment.



IRAQI ASSYRIAN, MARIANA BATHOORN

Mariana is an Assyrian from Iraq who arrived in Australia in 2017 after waiting for almost three years in Turkey for a refugee visa. She is currently in her second year studying a Bachelor of Medical Science. Mariana also works as a volunteer for STARTTS in the youth program. Her dreams are to make people more aware about refugees and their condition and be an effective Australian citizen.

COMMUNITY SPEAKERS



THE PEACEMAKERS ENSEMBLE, BASHAR HANNA

In 1998, Bashar migrated to Australia where he undertook further study and professional training in a myriad of disciplines. For three years, Bashar worked intensively with newly arrived refugees who were struggling with resettlement. Bashar is the founder of the Choir of Love, the Peacemakers

Team and the Mesopotamian Ensemble. In 2014, Bashar established an Arts and Community Development Centre which will be used by diverse and emerging Australian communities facing social challenges. As an Australian citizen of Mesopotamian descent, Bashar carries a message of peace and love.

ROHINGYA COMMUNITY, SAJEDA BAHADURMIA

Sajeda arrived in Australia as a refugee in 2013, and has since been serving her community in numerous ways. Sajeda has helped provide support to women by linking them to study, employment, immigration and health services. Sajeda is also a trained STARTTS facilitator who helps run the FICT (Families in Cultural Transition) program. She is an advocate for the needs of refugees and for her Rohingya community.



COMMUNITY SPEAKERS



TAMIL COMMUNITY, YASOTHA PATHMANATHAN

Yasotha is a representative from the Tamil Community in Australia. The Tamil Community is an ethnic minority from Sri Lanka who have survived the civil war. Yasotha's main passion is working with newly arrived migrants and elderly people who are mentally and physically struggling to settle in their new country. She has been facilitating FICT (Families InCultural Transition) and OPICT (Older People In Cultural Transition) with STARTTS since 2001. Yasotha is also passionate about yoga, as she believes its values and teachings help teach others to live peacefully.



TIBETAN YOUTH, STARTTS TIBETAN YOUTH GROUP

The Tibetan Youth Group meet on a regular basis to experience opportunities of meeting each other and rejoicing in their shared identity. As Tibetans they share a common purpose of continuing the Tibetan Struggle. In this youth group facilitated by STARTTS they are able to work on leadership skills as well as have the opportunity to participate in sporting competitions.



COMMUNITY SPEAKERS



UYGHUR COMMUNITY, ZULFIA ERK

Zulfia currently works as a Linker for Settlement Services International (SSI) and Ability Links NSW. This has enabled her to support the Uyghur Community by linking them to services such as STARTTS, SSI foster care program, and SSI community kitchen, where they are able to connect to the wider community and services. The Uyghur community hopes to further expand their networks and connect with other communities and organisations in the coming years as well as to build capacity and have a better understanding of their own people and others around them. Building outside connections will help their people integrate better into their new home in Sydney. Zulfia says her main goal is to break down barriers and provide support to those who need it most.



VIETNAMESE AUSTRALIAN, KAREN HO

Karen is currently completing her final semester of a Master of Social Work (Qualifying) at Western Sydney University and is proud to be a child of refugee parents who survived the Vietnam war. She is passionate about the virtues that competitive sport can produce, and about advocating for the needs of refugees and young people suffering from transgenerational-trauma.

COMMUNITY SPEAKERS



YAZIDI COMMUNITY, AHMAD IESSO

Ahmad has been helping his Yazidi Community for the past 2 years. He hopes to help them heal from the trauma their culture has endured, along with empowering them and assisting their needs as they re-settle in Australia.



On behalf of STARTTS and the CiCT team, we would like to thank you for attending the Communities in Cultural Transition Forum 2019. We would also like to extend this thanks to each of our presenters and volunteers for their contribution and participation.

STARTTS is a specialist, non-profit organisation that for 30 years has provided culturally relevant psychological treatment and support, and community interventions, to help people and communities heal the scars of torture and refugee trauma and rebuild their lives in Australia. STARTTS also fosters a positive recovery environment through the provision of training to services, advocacy and policy work.

The CiCT Program is funded by the Australian Government of Home Affairs. For more information please visit www.dss.gov.au



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs



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and Rehabilitation of Torture and
Trauma Survivors**

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and edited by Emily Lohrey



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